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TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON

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MILITARY

Negative

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EXTERNAL - POLITICAL

1. Salinger Visit. Khrushchev devoted a substantial part of May 12 (Saturday) and May 13 (Sunday) to White House Press Secretary Pierre Salinger (the second meeting was not reported by the Soviet press). On the morning of May 14 the Soviet leader departed for Bulgaria. Thus the period reported on in this WEEKA was fairly solidly devoted to foreign affairs.

The Soviet press gave unusual coverage to Salinger's visit, which lasted from May 11 to 17. This attests to the importance attached by the Kremlin to relations with the US and, especially with the White House, and to the fact that Salinger was Adzhubei's guest. The coverage, however, was largely confined to reporting his program within the USSR. His remarks and answers to questions at a Soviet press luncheon went unreported after the hosts ruled that the meeting was off-the-record. Nor did the Soviet press venture any comment on the significance of Salinger's visit or indicate what progress was made in his mission to widen US-Soviet communications.

2. Khrushchev's Varna Speech. On May 17 the Soviet press published a speech delivered by Khrushchev in Varna, Bulgaria, the previous day. This was the first Khrushchev pronouncement of a substantive nature printed by the Soviet press during his Bulgarian visit. It may be significant that Khrushchev's accent was on a problem of the international Communist movement, rather than on general Soviet foreign policy or Soviet-Bulgarian bilateral relations. What Khrushchev seemed to be saying was that the USSR is courting closer relations with Yugoslavia. Owing to the generally acknowledged formula that Yugoslavia is to China as Albania is to the USSR, this development may lead to a new turn in the Soviet-Chinese ideological dispute.

3. Laos. The Soviet press has continued to avoid sensationalism in reporting Laotian developments and there has been a noticeable absence of sweeping charges that the US is seeking to exploit the Laotian situation for increasing international tension generally. This has bolstered the impression that the US still desires a peaceful negotiated settlement. The Soviet press has, of course, reported the US military build-up in Thailand and claimed that this could endanger a peaceful settlement. On the other hand, it has reported that Souvanna Phouma is returning to Laos and that he will renew his effort to form a coalition government.

4. Berlin/Germany. The uproar which developed in the Western press following Chancellor ADENAUER's Berlin press conference was finally reflected in a commentary by Izvestiya's German expert, POLYANOV, printed in the May 11 Izvestiya. This article used the development primarily to highlight the importance of Soviet-US Berlin discussions and stress Soviet concern that the US might permit "the tender shoots of understanding" achieved to date to be trampled by "West German militarists."

A subsequent Pravda commentary by MAYEVSKY on May 13 also referred to the Chancellor's alleged efforts to sabotage US-Soviet discussions on Berlin. However, in the main, Mayevsky's article was directed to supporting a non-aggression pact between NATO and the Warsaw Treaty countries. Mayevsky complained that

the NATO countries had failed to endorse this proposal at Athens and disputed STIKKER's criticisms of it. The article asserted that such a treaty is necessary in addition to the UN Charter because West Germany is not a UN member.

On May 15 the Embassy received a note from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs responding to the Embassy's note of March 10, [redacted] (b)

INTERNAL - POLITICAL

5. Leadership. In his address on May 10 to the All-Union Conference of Rail Transport Workers, Khrushchev, for the second time in a month, alluded to the rigors of high office. He joked that Soviet workers have a seven-hour day, but that former trade-union leader N. M. SHVERNIK and the present chairman of the All-Union Central Committee of Trade Unions V. V. GRISHIN had each in turn failed to normalize the working hours of the Council of Ministers. The First Secretary did not repeat his April 19 remark (A-833, April 24) that he still felt full of vigor.

Khrushchev seemed to be in a name-dropping and America-conscious mood. He recalled his visit to the United States in 1959, when President EISENHOWER showed him the Mesta steel plant in Pittsburgh. He also mentioned the more contemporary Presidium Member A. N. KOSYGIN ("Recently Comrade Kosygin and I were in Klin ..."), as well as newly-elected Oblast First Secretary and rapidly rising Leningrad Party worker, V. S. TOLSTIKOV, whom he credited with a plan for increased employment of able-bodied pensioners.

Less complimentary were Khrushchev's remarks about two old colleagues, V. M. MOLOTOV and Lazar KAGANOVICH, whose stewardship of the transport industry "before the XX Congress" received low marks. (The reference to Molotov's connection with the transport industry is not immediately clear; locally available reference works do not indicate that his connection with transport was ever very close.) Khrushchev gave Molotov credit for at least being a good "petitioner" for the railroad industry; about which he had, of course, no technical understanding. He described Kaganovich as a man who was so overconfident of his own abilities as a transport administrator that he remarked, "Now I'm resigning or you're resigning me, but keep in mind that if something should happen . . . I'm always ready to come back at the first call." Press reports of the speech indicate that Khrushchev drew laughs when he remarked that Kaganovich was sure he had invented railroads himself but that in fact he was an "oral administrator" who, "as you know ... could out-shout almost anybody." Khrushchev's criticisms of Old Bolsheviks Molotov and Kaganovich, though calculated to belittle them, were in line with his remarks to Gardner COWLES on April 20 (WEEKA No. 18, May 4, 1962) that Molotov, Kaganovich and VOROSHILOV "had behind them not a little that was good."

The First Secretary made two references to the United States in addition to the previously cited remark about former President Eisenhower. He told his listeners of the rapidly developing American trucking industry, some features of which he said deserve Soviet emulation, and gave the US credit for superior labor productivity. He also, however, took a mild slap at the US when he accused its space scientists of having failed to hit the moon.

In concluding his May 10 speech, Khrushchev pronounced the Soviet Union "the most advanced Socialist state, which now holds second place in the world in economic development and first place in science and culture."

In a May 16 speech in Sofia, as reported by Pravda, Khrushchev again joked about his duties and took a dig at American executive habits when he told the people of Varna, in accepting an "unexpected" award of honorary citizenship of the city: "You, of course, should not imagine that you are going to work and I shall go and play golf [gay animation]. No, I also work and shall work and hope that this work will benefit not only the Soviet people but also our common Soviet-Bulgarian interests."

Meanwhile, back in Moscow, Chairman of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers Leonid BREZHNEV and First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers A. N. Kosygin, had both been appearing at awards ceremonies and receiving foreign dignitaries. On May 12 Brezhnev presented awards to outstanding press workers and Kosygin received the Chairman of the East German Council of Ministers; on May 14 Brezhnev presided over the awarding of Lenin Prizes and Kosygin received the British Ambassador; and on May 16 Brezhnev received a Ceylon parliamentary delegation.

With the exception of PODGORNY and VORONOV, all Presidium members plus CPSU Central Committee Secretaries SHELEPIN and DEMICHEV, were on hand to see Khrushchev off for Sofia on May 14; CPSU Central Committee Secretary PONOMAREV was among those who accompanied Khrushchev; CPSU Central Committee Secretary ILYICHEV still is in Czechoslovakia (see WEEKA No. 19, May 11).

An Embassy officer who visited Kiev during the week noted a minor variation in political style: remaining May Day paintings of Khrushchev usually showed a man with a Cupid's wisp of hair adorning his pate, in contrast to the plain Moscow Khrushchev.

6. Central Committee Apparat Controlled by Koslov? Two New Sections Presumed to Exist. At a Conference of Court Workers held in Moscow from May 10-12, particular attention was paid to the "suppression of anti-social elements leading parasitical lives" and to "strengthening the fight against loafers." Therefore, the appearance at the conference of V. A. DYAKOV, who was identified as "Chief of a Central Committee Section," in the company of N. R. MIRONOV, who is known to head the CPSU-CC Administrative Organs Section (which deals with courts and police), suggests strongly that Dyakov's duties may center around management of such voluntary organizations as the druzhinniki and comradely courts (Despatch 1022, May 16).

That a Central Committee Section for the nationality question may exist was suggested by the report during the week of a conversation with a Soviet official. The official did not make clear the subordination of this section to the Central Committee leadership (Despatch 1023, May 16).

A knowledgeable Eastern European diplomatic source in Moscow agrees that Dyakov's identification (above) seems to confirm that a newly created Central Committee Section on voluntary social organs has been established, but he

disclaims any knowledge of a section on the nationalities question. This source believes that the Central Committee Apparat, as a whole, has been subject to the personal control of F. R. KOZLOV for the past several years. Both of the Central Committee Sections on Agriculture, however, he feels are directly subordinate to N.S. Khrushchev. This source is also impressed with the apparently greatly expanded role of the CPSU-CC Bureau of the RSFSR (Embassy Despatch No.1033, May 18, 1962).

7. Medical Standards At a Major Soviet Medical Center Severely Criticized. In an open letter to RSFSR Minister of Health N. A. VINOGRADOV, Soviet Russia (May 16) publishes biting criticism of the Rostov Medical Institute, which is described as one of the largest in the country. According to the letter, written by a Rostov-on-Don "writer", Vinagrodov, as Minister of Health, sent a commission to the Institute to investigate rumors of malpractice. The commission not only gave a clear bill of health to the Institute but recommended it as a model and suggested that others follow its practices. Subsequently the local Party organization apparently disagreed and conducted its own investigation. The Party investigation revealed numerous abuses. For example, out of 255 doctoral dissertations written on the basis of study sponsored by the Institute, only 11 produced results that could be considered of practical value -- this at a time when the Institute was not investigating a single local health problem. Topics for dissertation touched the ridiculous: one written by A.I. GOLOVINA, investigated the most efficient gymnasium temperature for the training of gymnasts (the answer, produced at the expense of great effort: normal room temperature, i.e., between 18° and 20° C).

The letter contained more serious allegations: the death rate in this "model" clinic was said to be 2-3 times higher than in an ordinary RSFSR Hospital, serious mistakes in diagnoses were made, students were conducting themselves amorally, and more than 10 percent were failing. Furthermore, the director was guilty of his own style of "the cult of personality" and his leading lecturer was accepting bribes. While Minister Vinagrodov may not be in personal trouble over the matter, it is apparent that a public reply to the open letter is now in order (Despatch No.1032, May 18, 1962).

8. Continued Discrimination against Religion. The week produced the usual volume of evidence indicating that the regime's campaign against organized religion continues unabated:

(1) In Moscow, no replacement has been found for Father BRONITSKY, parish priest of the city's only Roman Catholic church. Father Bronitsky, as expected, has been forced by illness to abandon his parish for at least several weeks (Despatch No. 856, March 27). For the past two Sundays, parishioners have been coming to church, saying a few prayers, and leaving without the ministrations of a priest.

(2) In Kiev, there was another report of repression against nuns of the Orthodox Church (Despatch 972, May 4). There was also a report from an American eye-witness that militiamen guarding one of the major Orthodox cathedrals during the Easter ceremony had allowed hooligans to enter the church on the night of April 28.

(3) A synagogue was reported burned in Georgia (Despatch No. 1024, May 16); an article in Soviet Kirgizya (May 8) described fist fights and disorders alleged to have taken place in a Frunze synagogue; and a provincial newspaper not normally received in the Embassy (Znamya Kommunizma, Odessa, April 14) told of supposed espionage activities by Israeli diplomats.

9. Unusual Weather Ascribed to American Nuclear Testing. After a week of almost constant rain, Moscow residents are beginning to speculate about the causes. Within the space of an hour, on the morning of May 18, Embassy staff members participated in at least four brief exchanges with Soviet citizens in which the typical Soviet comment was: "This awful rainy weather, we have never seen anything like this in Russia before . . . what could be causing it?" Two of the Soviets, a chauffeur and a waitress, suggested that the cause must be "those bombs that the Americans are exploding."

MILITARY

Negative.

FOR THE AMBASSADOR:

Boris H. Klosson

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